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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

To Principals of Collegiate Institutes, Vocational, High and Continuation Schools

Re Departmental Examinations in Grade XIII English Literature and Composition

1. THE ENGLISH LITERATURE EXAMINATION OF 1949

The following information in regard to the work of the candidates at the Grade XIII examination of 1949 in English Literature is presented in the hope that it may prove helpful to teachers of English in the secondary schools. It is to be understood that the allotment of marks to the several parts of the course and the comments upon the candidates' answers apply only to this Examination and that neither the scale of valuations nor the form of questions will necessarily be duplicated in future examinations in the subject.

The answer papers were evaluated on the basis of 100 marks which were divided as follows: Shakespeare—21; Longer Poems—21; Shorter Poems—18; Short Stories and Essays—12; *The Vicar of Wakefield* and *Typhoon*—17; Sight Poetry—11.

I. FORM OF ANSWERS

It remains important that answers should be properly spaced, accurately numbered for parts and sub-parts, and written legibly. Quotations should not only be worked into sentences which are structurally correct, but should be identified as quotations by the use of quotation marks.

There was an improvement in the number of completed answer papers over previous years. Nevertheless candidates should be urged to make a reasonable distribution of time for all questions in order that they may be answered as directed. Unless such a term as "list" is used, candidates should avoid answers which are slightly more than mere tabulations or a series of sentence fragments. On the other hand "State briefly" should not be answered by material running to two and a half pages.

Candidates who have had regular training in writing on formal examinations during the school year, not only in Grade XIII, but also in the lower grades, are at a distinct advantage with respect to effective organization of their answers at a departmental examination in English Literature.

Weaker students by failing to use topic sentences gave rambling answers which did not bear directly on the question. They also frequently read into questions what was not asked. Training in the analysis of the wording of the questions would help to avoid a mere paraphrase or synopsis of a poem or a story where a critical analysis is required. Often questions were half-answered because the candidate failed to relate his material to the specific point raised or went into a lengthy treatment of details not required.

II. ERRORS IN SPELLING

In 1949 deductions to a maximum of five were made for errors in spelling. It is suggested that because many candidates lost marks in spelling errors, time might well be devoted even in Upper School classes to a review and a mastery of the rules for spelling that may be found in the appendix of *The Canadian Speller* and in many composition texts. Candidates could avoid some errors if they referred to the spelling on the examination paper itself. The spelling of plurals, of words ending in -ful, of various verb tenses and of the possessive was poor. In addition special attention should be devoted to the spelling of words particularly applicable to the year's selections. The following words were frequently misspelled: alliteration, arouse, audience, beginning, besieged, Briton and Britain, busily, christening, clothes (not cloths), coming, commendable, descendant, desert, duel, finally, foretold, gullible, heighten, imagination, imitative, interrupt, jealous, knew and new, lead and led, loose and lose, melancholy, miracle, mislead, night (not nite), occasion, occur, occurred, persistence, planning, prophecy, purely, really, refer, relieve, reminisce, reminiscence, resemble, not ressemble), rough, scene, sense, sergeant, shepherd, soliloquy, speak and speech, superficial, suspense, their and there, through, tragedy and tragic, two, too and to, unconscious, until, weird, were and where.

III. FAULTY USAGE

Candidates should be reminded that answers should be written in clear, correct English, and that major errors in sentence structure, bad grammar, persistent lack of punctuation, conspicuous failue to use capitals and serious misuse of words result in loss of marks. Teachers are urged to insist on the use of correct forms in all written work in English Literature during the school year.

Common errors include such incorrect verb forms as has ran, has drank, hung for hanged, laying for lying; present participles used for the present tense; adjectives such as human used for nouns or made into nouns by adding -ness; nouns used for verbs; adverb clauses completing the verb *to be*; the unrelated *which*; sentence fragments, and a lack of relationship between clauses or phrases. Upper School candidates should realize that the use of slang as well as such expressions as "meet up with," "gets in bad with," "off of" mars the quality of their answers.

IV. NOTES ON THE ANSWERS

(Examples of candidates' answers which were considered satisfactory follow the comments on the answers to the questions.)

Question 1 (a):

State briefly the outcome of the main plot in the play by Shakespeare which you have studied.

Many candidates exercised poor judgment in answering this question and paid scant attention to the instructions. Common mistakes were outlining the plot from the beginning instead of dealing with the outcome, completely ignoring the word "briefly," or going to the opposite extreme and giving no detail at all, thus failing to recognize what constituted the main plot. Inadequate knowledge of the detail of the last scenes of the play was responsible for poor marks in many cases. For full marks the candidate was expected to show some awareness of the culmination of the plot, of nemesis or of retribution.

The plot of *Macbeth* concerns the complete disintegration of Macbeth's character. Macbeth has "fallen into the sere" and instead of the praises of his friends he has "mouth honour," and "curses not loud but deep." He looks on life now as a "brief candle" and wishes it was over. This is part of his punishment for his crimes.

Macduff beheads Macbeth to avenge the murder of his wife and children by Macbeth.

Lady Macbeth, who started Macbeth on his road of crime goes insane and "'Tis thought, by self and violent hands" she killed herself.

Malcolm, who has shown himself an able leader and organizer is crowned king and makes all the lords who helped him—Lennox, Ross, Siward, earls.

Thus Shakespeare winds up the plot and leaves not one character unaccounted for.

Question 1 (b):

Show how the qualities of character displayed by *one* leading person in the play contributed to the outcome referred to in your answer to *(a)*.

This question was frequently well answered. However, three faults were common—the choice of a character of insufficient importance in the play, discussing action without relating it to qualities of character, writing a general character sketch instead of discussing only characteristics which contributed to the outcome of the main plot or discussing characteristics without relating them definitely to the outcome.

If Hamlet had not been so hesitant, but had killed Claudius when the latter was praying, he would have preserved not only his own, but also Gertrude's, Ophelia's, Laertes' and Polonius' lives.

Because Hamlet was free from guile and did not suspect any treachery from Laertes, he took part in the sword fight and went to his death.

Since Hamlet had a keen sense of moral responsibility, he delayed the action of killing Claudius because he could not convince himself that it was really the right thing to do.

Being a very deep thinker, Hamlet, every time he decided on killing Claudius, would stop to think it over and to consider all the consequences and finally would end up not doing it.

Whereas all the previously mentioned characteristics show why Hamlet delayed so long before killing Claudius, Hamlet's impulsiveness was what led him to kill Polonius behind the curtain. When Claudius was killed, Hamlet had not planned it but did it on the spur of the moment also.

Question 2:

From the play by Shakespeare which you have studied select a scene that provides contrast with the main course of the play. What is the dramatic value of this contrast?

Unwise choice of scene was largely responsible for poor answers to this question. Scenes were frequently chosen which showed little if any contrast to the main course of the play. Often, where a scene with good contrast was chosen, the candidate proceeded to discuss the dramatic value of the scene, with no consideration of the contrast.

> The porter's soliloquy provides a contrast with the rest of the play. It follows directly the murder scene, with its tension and suspense. In it the porter, who has obviously been "carousing till the second cock" walks grudgingly to open the door to the knocker whom we heard at the end of the preceding scene. This scene provides relief from the strain which the audience has been under during th murder scene. There is dramatic contrast between the tense monosyllables of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth and the foolish mutterings of the porter. There is dramatic irony in the fact that the old man is pretending to be the porter at hell's gate, ignorant of the fact that a murder has just been committed. This scene contains some of the scarce humour in the play. There are puns "Come in, tailor, here you may roast your goose" and metaphors "that walk the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire." This speech also affords Macbeth and Lady Macbeth an opportunity to prepare themselves to meet the guests.

Question 3 (First option):

> A common grayness silvers everything,—
> All in a twilight, you and I alike
> —You, at the point of your first pride in me
> (That's gone, you know),—but, I, at every point:
> My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
> To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.

Explain the meaning of the above lines with reference to the scene indicated and the lives of Andrea del Sarto and Lucrezia.

Many candidates lost marks by merely writing a paraphrase of these lines. It is important that students should have more practice in interpreting questions. Neither summary nor paraphrase was asked for, but discussion about the scene and about Andrea and his wife was required. Many omitted all references

to the scene. In some cases vague answers indicated that sufficient study had not been given to mastering the content of the poem nor to understanding the characters of the two principals.

> Andrea is seated at the window of his lodging with his wife Lucrezia. He has just completed a painting of the two of them and regarding alternately it and the view outside his window is making comments upon this painting, and in truth his whole life. Andrea, an Italian Renaissance painter of nearly perfect technical skill is devoted to Lucrezia to the point of worship. She, however, endures his company only to gain her own selfish ends, for he provides her with money to pursue her pleasures, even though she is faithless to him. This money he raises by the selling of his paintings which must necessarily suffer, from this purely mercenary point of view. Lucrezia in fact was responsible for his returning from France where he was the guest of King Francis, and where he might have achieved the heights of artistic ability. Now Andrea remains subservient to her wishes and satisfied in her own company alone, any ambitions he might have entertained have been completely subdued, and so his art has likewise suffered a similar fate. As he remarks, his painting like his life is dull, subdued and in the twilight of its existence. Although known as "the faultless painter" he lacks imagination, and inspiration to become truly great. His paintings reflect this fault, and of this he remarks. His painting of Lucrezia merely tones down the expression of her pride in him that she once had, and now has lost, but in his own painting he has toned down, and subdued all those feelings of hope, ambition, his aspirations and his youth to match the twilight of the scene outside his window. Thus his life like his paintings is relegated to "a common grayness."

Question 3 (Second option):

(a) State, and illustrate by reference to the poem, *three* important characteristics of the old ballads that are also found in *The Ancient Mariner.*

(b) How does Coleridge give a sense of reality to the ancient mariner's tale despite its remoteness from ordinary experience?

(a) Those candidates who chose this option appeared to have a good knowledge of ballad characteristics. The weakness of some answers lay in rather general statements of ballad characteristics without sufficient illustration from *The Ancient*

Mariner. Many students who chose the ballad stanza as a characteristic did not qualify their answers in any way.

> *The Ancient Mariner* is like an Old Ballad because there is abrupt transition from one speaker to another and from one incident to another. Also the time element means nothing. The mariner goes on telling his story and is at an interesting part when all at once the wedding guest is speaking. This happens in several instances. It makes it rather difficult to follow at first.
>
> Here and there throughout the poem, while in the middle of describing the mariner's voyage and troubles there is a little insertion concerning the progress of the wedding. There is no sense of time. The boat travels at an absurd rate. This is not told in words of swiftness but by having the boat in one ocean in one verse and in practically no time it is in another ocean.
>
> Old words and dialect are used in this delightful poem. Some of them are "eftsoon," "quoth," and "uprist" and many, many more. Most of these words are able to be understood and they add an old and pleasing atmosphere to the poem.
>
> This poem, like the Old Ballad, is filled with superstition. The boat with its crew of Death and Life-in-Death, the spirit that guided the ship, the dropping down of the men on the mariner's boat, the sinking of the ship, and the spirits leaving the men's bodies are some of the superstitious parts.

(b) Candidates again failed to read and interpret the question adequately. In some cases they made little distinction between their answers to (a) and to (b). A common fault was to suggest that the moral lent reality to the mariner's tale.

> Although the story is remote and unreal as compared to the life of the modern-day reader, there is nevertheless an air of reality. This results from three things.
>
> The first of these is the use of the first person. Because it is the Mariner speaking and not some one who has heard the story, the reader feels, while he is reading at any rate, that there is a certain amount of credibility in the story.
>
> The second device is the use of the wedding guest. The reader unconsciously allies himself with the wedding guest and feels as if the story were being told to him. (The wedding guest also supplies variety by interjecting questions.)

The third way is the vivid description. Coleridge in such passages as:

> "Bright and red like God's own head
> The glorious sun uprist."

has caught beauty and realism. The reader feels that beauty such as described, the sunrise, the ice floes in the southern seas, must exist.

These three all contribute to the realism of the story.

Question 4:

(a) Show the connection of each of the following passages with the general thought of the poem from which it is taken.

(b) Explain the meaning of the italicized words.

(i) Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries *dight.*

(ii) Come; but keep thy *wonted* state,
With even step and musing gait,
And looks *commercing* with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes.

The number of candidates who failed to recognize these lines was surprising in vew of the fact that they were taken from the Longer Poems whch were to be studied intensively. Even when they were recognized as being lines from Milton, some candidates did not recognize from which of the two poems the lines came. The question did not call for the naming of the poems, but it did require some statement establishing the connection with the general thought of the poem. Many students who recognized the quotations too often gave a paraphrase of each passage. Intelligent understanding of a poem calls for an appreciation of the meaning of the words used. Too often no mark (or at most one mark) was obtained for the meanings of the words.

(a) (i) This excerpt from L'Allegro illustrate the joy, gaiety and exultation of the poem as a whole. In this poem the poet has invited joy, mirth, jests, quips, wiles, sport, liberty and laughter to be his companions. In the excerpt he says that he enjoys walking in the open through the countryside during early morning. He does not care whether

anyone sees him. He enjoys seeing the trees, green hills and the sunrise, and clouds. He has dismissed melancholy from his mind and soul and revels in the lighter amusements and beauties of life. This passage is therefore indicative of the light, frolicsome, buoyant, cheerful, happy air prevalent throughout the poem.

(ii) This passage from the companion piece of L'Allegro namely Il Penseroso is also indicative of the spirit of the latter, which is almost directly opposite to that of L'Allegro. In Il Penseroso the poet has dismissed "the vain deluding Joys" and adopted as his way of life a thoughtful, serious, melancholy and meditative attitude. He enjoys walking in the evening through the countryside and asks for Melancholy as his companion. In the aforementioned passage he requests Melancholy to remain in that state in which he is accustomed to think of her, walking slowly like a nun wrapped in thought and holding intercourse with heaven which causes her eyes to reflect the very innermost secrets of her soul. This illustrates his own attitude toward life, serious, sombre, thoughtful and given to peaceful, quiet, lonely meditation free from what seem to him the light, fruitless trivialities of life which L'Allegro enjoys.

(b) dight—means decorated
wonted—means accustomed
commercing—means holding intercourse with

Question 5:

This was a well-balanced question and one which seemed quite fair, no matter which option was selected. At first glance the first option might seem the easier, but the second option was actually no more difficult. From their frequency of treatment they seemed equally popular.

In this question there seemed to be a general lack of clarity in the answers, and there was some carelessness in the interpretation of the requirements of the question.

(First option):

Discuss, with references to the poem, the merits of Newbolt's *He Fell Among Thieves.*

There was a tendency to make a narrative of this poem and to neglect the merits. When a merit was dealt with, the answer was too vague. Quotations, when used, were often not effectively applied.

In this well-known poem there was no scarcity of material from which a good answer could be given. Some of the merits which could be dealt with are the presentation of character, the use of description, the theme with its patriotic appeal, the use of pathos, the effective use of suspense and climax, and the symbolism.

He Fell Among Thieves is an excellent bit of poetry—not only in its skilful style, but also in the content. It is the story of a man in India, who stirs our hearts by putting up such a gallant fight against the enemy—"If one may settle the score for five." And then we learn that, too, he is a thoughtful man, not just a heroic, who wishes to spend his last moments on a high hill, alone. In a series of vivid flashbacks we see his old boyhood home; the sun upon his books, his father calling him down to ride from the terrace, his little church, his school days of sport and joviality. We see a picture of the ship that would have taken him home. Perhaps he was going to leave soon—for that beloved place of which he was so fond. But the dawn cuts short his reveries, and once more he descends to his murderers.

Although he is a young man, his last words are in praise of the God that dwells on earth and sun—"I have loved—I praise and adore Thee." The short sentence at the first telling of the enemy's aim of "Blood for our blood" is further carried out by the short sentence signifying that action "A sword swept." And after it peace, and the countryside slept. Newbolt has told an adventure story—a murder story, really. It is exciting for that reason if for no other. Yet into the fabric of his tale he has woven the story and character of a man—noble, courageous, God-fearing, sporting young chap, so soon to have his life snatched from him.

There is no harsh note, for we even admire the enemy a little for his respect for courage.

The short sentences and realistic flashbacks previously mentioned add a good deal to the drama of the situation. Newbolt has told an adventure story, revealed a great knowledge of human nature, created an admirable character, and written a dramatic poem. *He Fell Among Thieves* is well worth the reading.

(Second option):

How does Wordsworth employ description of Peele Castle to illustrate the development of his thought in *Elegiac Stanzas?*

In this option many candidates described the two pictures

of Peele Castle but failed to grasp the significance of the two contrasting pictures, and the change in Wordsworth's philosophy of life. As a result the two parts of the poem were not related and the most important thought—"Not without hope we suffer and we mourn"—was entirely ignored.

> At the beginning of the poem, Wordsworth states that formerly he would have painted Peele Castle "beside a sea that did not cease to smile." He says that he always thought of the castle as a peaceful place underneath a sunny sky and a quiet ocean. This was before any tragedy had entered into his life, and he could see no reason to paint the castle in unpleasant weather. However after the death of his brother he realizes that one's life cannot always be peaceful and serene. He realizes that people too must have storms. Then he realizes the fitness of the portrayal of the castle in a tempest. He says he "loves to see the look with which it braves, cased in the unfeeling armour of old time, the lightning wind, and deep-mouthed waves." He compares man's life to the castle, braving wind and waves, and not becoming weakened by them. He says that it is much better for a man to face grief and pain and try to overcome it, just as the castle bears up under the storms than to try to escape reality and always live under a sunny sky.

Question 6 (First option):

Compare *A Canadian Boat Song* (Thomas Moore) and *Twilight on Tweed* (Andrew Lang) in regard to (i) the setting described, (ii) the thought and emotion expressed.

Few candidates chose the first part of Question 6, and of those who attempted it, few presented their answers skilfully. Perhaps their avoidance of this part showed that these two poems were not so attractive to the candidates as the didactic and the patriotic sonnets in the alternative part of the question, or perhaps they recognized that the comparison required a feeling for critical appreciation and not a mere statement of content.

> A Canadian Boat Song describes the Canadian river, the blue waters and sky, the green shores, the little island and the hint of the nearby rapids.
>
> Twilight on Tweed describes in its lovely little musical four line stanzas the Scottish country side, right at the border hills. It describes the hills and the river, but not in the rather vigorous, hopeful, almost joyous young mood of high adventure of Canadian Boat Song, but rather in a soft,

sad, fanciful mood, half in reality and half in fond memories and fancies of boyhood as is shown in "The air is full of ballad notes, Born out of long ago."

The Canadian Boat Song is a little lyric, a song, first encouraging the men to row, and then a prayer to the Saint of the green isle to give them a prosperous and fortunate voyage and a chorus begging the breeze to blow. Perhaps there is a little anxiety about the rapids being near, but generally it is a joyful poem, full of music and adventure, whereas Twilight on Tweed shows us the pathos of reminiscence heightened by the last two lines telling us that the friend he expected and loved is dead, and this causes pain in the loving and dear memories that rise as he looks over his boyhood home.

Question 6 (Second option):

State the main thought in *one* of the following poems and show how this thought is developed: *Ozymandias* (Shelley); *Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland* (Wordsworth).

The two sonnets were chosen by almost equal numbers of pupils. Most candidates did satisfactory work in stating the main thought but found greater difficulty in showing how this thought was developed. Perhaps this difficulty arises from a lack of feeling for, or an understanding of, literary forms and devices. References might well have been made to the sonnet form with its divisions of thought, to irony, to contrast, and to personification or apostrophe. Instead of some discussion of such points as these, many candidates gave a summary of the sonnet. This was not what the question required.

Shelley's poetry very often has a deeper meaning than would appear on the surface—a quality which I enjoy very much. His sonnet Ozymandias is one of his best, and illustrates that quality perfectly. The main thought of the poem is the brief momentary powers of man, and man's apparent unawareness of that fact. He tells the story in, as I said, a sonnet form. The first eight lines, the octet, tell of the high and mighty king who had a sculptor erect for him a statue —a man who well read the sneer of cold command upon this tyrant's face. The traveller who is telling the story goes on in the sextet to say that now, beside those two "vast and trunkless legs of stone" in the desert nothing remains. Although the words "Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!" are to be found at the foot of the statue, nothing is left now but the vast and lonely sands stretching far away.

How ironical it seems—that just these words should remain among the ruins of that colossal wreck. How short-lived is man's power, and how everlasting the vast sands of the desert in comparison.

"Thoughts of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland" was inspired by the capture of Switzerland, a bulwark of freedom by Napoleon. The main thought Wordsworth expresses is a deeply-felt prayer that Freedom may "cleave to that which still is left," meaning Britain.

The thought is developed by means of an apostrophe to Freedom throughout the poem. In the sextet of the Miltonian sonnet, Wordsworth describes the driving of Freedom from Switzerland, who "foughts't with holy glee against the tyrant but hast vainly striven;" in the octave Wordsworth begs Freedom not to desert Britain, lest she should no longer hear either the voice of the mountains, or of the sea.

The thought is lofty and inspired, in true sonnet form, and the feelings of the poet are expressed in elevated style, with the use of proper diction and much personification.

Question 7 (First option):

Show how in Hardy's story *The Three Strangers* the reader's interest is heightened by the use which is made of *two* of the following: setting, characterization, plot.

Most candidates answered this question well. The more effective answers contained definite topic sentences indicating the method of treatment—"The setting of this story arouses our interest in a number of ways." Under setting some candidates merely stated facts—a rainy night, a lonely cottage—without showing what the author makes us see or feel or suspect. Instead of discussing those features of the plot which heighten interest such as suspense, clues, surprise, order of events, climax, etc., many candidates simply retold the story. Too frequently candidates gave a character sketch instead of showing how Hardy's characterization aroused interest. Here reference could be made to the vivid portrayal of the rustic characters, the humour of the constable, the contrast between the Fennels, or the difference in the three strangers. Many candidates failed to distinguish between characterization and plot.

In Hardy's "The Three Strangers" the reader's interest is heightened by use of 1. setting and 2. characterization. Right from the first line the reader takes an interest. The

setting is ideal for a mystery thriller. Hardy presents a lonely highland plain, a tremendous cloudburst of rain, a solitary house filled with music and dancing, and a shabby stranger stumbling through the wet to seek shelter in this cheerful abode. What more suspense could an opening setting offer? Hardy also produces an anti-climax first introducing a happy party and then a struggling stranger. Hardy also picks up reader interest with his characterization. His variety of characters is enjoyable. First the owner of the house and his wife—he's a generous lean fellow, a real party man while she is fat and stingy. Then the dancing couple—he's forty while she's under twenty and they both giggle. He also has a hangman, not serious as we would think them but merry and a good singer and drinker. Only mentioning these five or six would heighten reader interest but Hardy presents nineteen such characters.

Question 7 (Second option):

(a) State the ideas regarding the effective use of language which Gardiner presents in his essay *On Big Words.*

(b) Refer to *three* illustrations given in the essay that support these ideas.

(a) Since this essay has a definite plan or outline, candidates who were most successful in answering this question wrote a précis of it. Poor answers contained vague statements, such as, "Great authors used small words well," instead of "Coleridge used small words effectively to gain vivid pictorial effects."

(b) Some candidates failed to notice the relationship between parts *(a)* and *(b)* of question 7. The illustrations given in *(b)* had to apply to statements given in their answers for *(a)*. The good student displayed an exact knowledge of the illustration and commented on its use and significance.

(a) Gardiner says that a good vocabulary is a fine thing to have but you shouldn't clutter your everyday language with big words. He says that an effective use of words does not necessarily mean the use of showy, fancy words. As a third point, Gardiner shows how words can be used with a new meaning in a freshness that is remarkable. He points for example to Shakespeare's use of "sweet" in "sweet o' the year." He also makes the point that big words are for the expression of ideas to explain things to others while our emotions are best expressed in simple, clear, "little" words. He says even in pictorial description, small words

are more efficient. As a conclusion he shows how even when words are used for rhetorical and decorative purposes they are better the smaller they are. Gardiner has given four definitely defined rules and several other rules that follow the headings. He makes an excellent "case" against the use of big words.

(b) As support for his rule that pictorial description benefits by the use of small, pointed words, Gardiner uses a quotation of Coleridge from The Ancient Mariner. It is describing the coming of night at the equator and does so in a most vivid and concrete fashion that it is truly a strong supporting illustration.

"The sun's rim dips, the stars rush out
With one stride comes the dark."

As an illustration of his first point that a good vocabulary is all right if not used in everyday speech, he uses the incident of the "man in the white alpaca jacket" speaking to him while cutting down the nettles. The man uses such phrases as:

"They disseminate themselves more luxuriantly." or
"The aridity of the season is deleterious to the crops."

The author replied to the first statement:

"They spread like the dickens."

This shows the humour and nonsense of using big words in a clear and interesting fashion.

To illustrate the fact that fancy words should not replace common, decent words, Gardiner used the reporter's line of "propelled the sphere" for kicking the football and "manipulated the ivories" as examples of how good words have been replaced by obnoxious ones.

Question 8:

(a) How does each of *two* different situations or occurrences in *The Vicar of Wakefield* reveal distinctive qualities of the vicar's character?

(a) This question tested the candidate's ability to select significant or important situations and to show how they brought out distinctive qualities of the Vicar's character. Poor answers failed to establish the situation satisfactorily by giving very few details. Some candidates put incorrect or superficial interpretations on the incident chosen. An example of this was

—"The upsetting of the face-wash shows the Vicar's mean sense of humour."

(a) (i) The trip of the Vicar to the fair shows his complete unworldliness. When the merchants there criticize his horse he begins to believe what they say, and he is ashamed of having brought such a poor horse for sale. When he meets Mr. Jenkinson there he is taken in by him. He is susceptible to flattery and is very pleased to hear Mr. Jenkinson praise his books. He loves to have a friendly argument, and enjoys Mr. Jenkinson's deep comments on philosophical matters, although he sometimes cannot follow his reasoning. He is naive because he takes Mr. Jenkinson's laconic remarks on his philosophy as an evidence of profound thought rather than ignorance of what the Vicar is talking about. He trusts everyone because he is willing to take Mr. Jenkinson's note to Farmer Flamborough as payment for the horse.

(ii) When the Vicar is in jail his best qualities come to the fore. We learn about his modern ideas on jail reform. He sets up a system of rewards and punishments and turns all the prisoners from their evil ways in a matter of weeks. He shows his absolute uprightness in refusing to allow the squire to marry Miss Wilmot. He is also a little stubborn in this respect. He is very fond of his family and desires to have his children with him whenever possible. He shows that he is above petty annoyances because he is not disturbed by the rowdy conduct of the prisoners during his first few sermons. He does not hold a grudge, for he becomes fast friends with Mr. Jenkinson, although the latter had deceived him. He is happy and serene because he has a clear conscience and has no trouble sleeping on the hard prison floor.

(b) (i) List *three* ways in which the coming of the great storm is foretold in Conrad's *Typhoon.*

(ii) Name *two* qualities of Captain MacWhirr which were conspicuous during the typhoon and illustrate each by a brief reference to the story.

(i) Full credit was given for answers which stated the facts briefly but not for those that were vague. Some merely listed signs which might have applied to the coming of any storm. In general the difference between candidates is this: One learns a fact and gives it back as a bare fact; the good student receives a vivid impression and recreates it in clear and imaginative English. The first says, "The barometer fell," and "A cloud appeared in the sky;" the second, "The barometer kept going down,

down to an unprecedented low," and "A dark cloud of sinister aspect crept nearer the ship." In (ii) many candidates failed to note the words "conspicuous" and "during the typhoon."

(b) (i) The coming of the storm was shown first by a strange swell coming at the boat which forced her to ship water and which seemed to have no great wind powering it and seemed irregular. The storm's coming was also foretold by the rapid drop of the barometer which was as low as MacWhirr had ever seen. The dead calm and complete lack of wind was a foreboding which seemed to foretell a great storm.

(ii) Captain MacWhirr's strictness and his wish for order and exactness were shown in the typhoon. He wanted things neat and orderly all the time. When Jukes was merely worrying about staying alive MacWhirr's thought was to settle the coolies even if they didn't live through the storm. He couldn't have disorder on the ship for five minutes.

Captain MacWhirr had a very strict idea of obedience and when he issued an order he expected it done. He ordered Jukes to settle the coolies and said no more. He didn't say try to, he just told Jukes to settle the coolies. When Jukes returned he was ready for the Captain's praise and admiration but the Captain just acknowledged that the work was done, and that was all. "Thought you would" he said and without further talk dropped the subject. He had given an order and it had been done and that was all there was to it.

Question 9:

THE WINDMILL

The green corn waving in the dale,
  The ripe grass waving on the hill:
I lean across the paddock pale
  And gaze upon the giddy mill.

Its hurtling sails a mighty sweep
  Cut through the air: with rushing sound
Each strikes in fury down the steep,
  Rattles, and whirls in chase around.

Beside his sacks the miller stands
  On high within the open door:
A book and pencil in his hands,
  His grist and meal he reckoneth o'er.

His tireless merry slave the wind
  Is busy with his work to-day:
From whencesoe'er, he comes to grind;
  He hath a will and knows the way.

He gives the creaking sails a spin,
  The circling millstones faster flee,
The shuddering timbers groan within,
  And down the shoot the meal runs free.

The miller giveth him no thanks,
  And doth not much his work o'erlook:
He stands beside the sacks, and ranks
  The figures in his dusty book.

—*Robert Bridges.*

(a) Describe in your own words the scene presented in this poem.

(b) Select a passage of particular interest with reference to the windmill and show how the effects of this passage are achieved.

(c) Explain how the contrast found in the poem is made interesting to the reader.

Part *(a)* called for a descriptive paragraph which made reference to the corn, the grass, the windmill, and the miller. Good candidates paid attention to the style of their paragraphs avoiding the childish, disjointed sentences which were too common in many of the answers.

With Part *(b)* those candidates properly trained in appreciation found little difficulty. There were two common types of inadequate treatment. One was vague statements such as "This was well done;" "The words were well chosen." The second type was an identifying of figures of speech and poetic devices without stating what they contributed to the poem.

For Part *(c)* there were several contrasts which could be selected. The most popular one was that of the wind as the "tireless merry slave" and the matter-of-fact miller. Other contrasts were the old-fashioned windmill and the practical miller; the busy, noisy mill and the quiet setting.

(a) The green grass and corn are waving in the wind, as I lean on the fence and watch the windmill. Its huge sails are whizzing through the air, rattling and whirling round and round. The miller is standing within the open door with

a book and pencil in his hand making up his accounts. The wind whirls the sails, and the wood creaks with the strain, and the ground meal runs down the shoot. The miller does not pay any attention to the windmill but keeps jotting down the figures in his "dusty book."

(b) In the second verse, where the author is describing the movement of the sails, the effects are achieved mainly by the idea of violent motion which every verb and adjective conveys.

He uses adjectives like "hurtling sails," "rushing sound," "mighty sweep." These adjectives are not pictorial but every one of them suggests the rapid, giddy swing of the sails.

The verbs also emphasize the idea of violent swift motion. Such words as "cut through the air," "strike in fury," "rattles and whirls" are all verbs of decided and abrupt motion..

The hard consonants also heighten the effect of the stanza by imitating the clattering and rattling of the mill. A good example of this use is afforded in the following line . . . "Rattles and whirls in chase around." In this verse also sibilants are used to imitate the sound of the wind

. . . with rushing sound
Each strikes in fury down the steep."

(c) The contrast in the poem is made interesting to the reader because Bridges alternates the stanzas of the contrast between the description of the hard-working wind, and its seemingly idle master, the miller. The second, fourth, and fifth stanzas describe the wind at work while the third and sixth stanzas describe the miller. Thus by mixing the stanzas and comparing the amount of work done by the wind and by the miller, Bridges builds an effective contrast.

2. THE ENGLISH COMPOSITION EXAMINATION OF 1949

The following comments on the Grade XIII examination of 1949 in English Composition are made in the hope that they will prove useful to teachers of this subject. It should be understood, however, that the allotment of marks and the method of marking used in this examination will not necessarily apply in the future.

These marks were assigned to the various parts of the paper:

The Essay	66 marks
The Vocabulary	10 marks
The Precis	24 marks
Total	100 marks

I. General Comment

The 1949 paper produced a slightly higher percentage of first class honours in comparison with papers of recent years. The percentage of failures remained almost the same as in 1948. Candidates again missed first class honours frequently because of their inability to meet the requirements of the question on vocabulary. Spelling errors averaged slightly over two per paper, but spelling still remained a factor in the failure of some papers which would otherwise have received a pass. Only occasionally was the full penalty of 5 imposed.

II. Question 1, The Essay—66 marks

1. The standards for the grading of the essay were substantially the same as those given in the 1945 Memorandum, which were as follows:

"Essays comparatively free from errors but commonplace might receive from 33-39 marks.

Essays which were still commonplace, but revealed some power of organization and had some merit in either content or style might receive from 40-43 marks.

Those in the next higher grade, 44-49 marks, showed merit in style or content, were competently handled, and were somewhat interesting.

We now come to essays from 50-66 marks, that is, first class honour work in this part of the paper. These essays showed merit in content and style. They did not need to be brilliant, but those written plainly and in a straightforward style, if interesting, were considered in this group. If the essay could be called attractive, meritorious, if it had good content, and indicated some consciousness of word values and of effective sentence structure, it received from 50-55. If there was decided excellence in either content or style, such as a comprehensive and intimate knowledge of subject matter, freshness of thought, skill in arrangement, command of sentence structure, or consciousness of word values, the essay received from 56-60. If all

these excellencies were present and the essay showed distinction and individuality in style the mark assigned was from 61-66.

2. It should be emphasized once more that essays were graded on their positive merits in the first place, and penalized for errors only in the second place. This means that essays were not marked in a negative way according to the number of errors, but that positive credit was given for merits in spite of errors. Merits which guided the examiners were as follows, listed in an ascending scale of value:

(a) Content which, though commonplace perhaps, showed that the candidate had brought his mind to bear on the subject and was mature enough to proceed to university work;

(b) The ability to organize this content into a clear, well-paragraphed, unified piece of writing;

(c) The ability to interest the reader by ideas, details, reasoning, convincing enthusiasm, or style.

The most meritorious essays by these standards were also the most correct. An essay with a few major errors was passed if it revealed compensating merits. A childish or immature essay was failed, even if correctly written. The large number of essays at the credit level suggests that commonplace ideas are too common among the candidates, or that these lack the self-confidence necessary to attack a problem from an individual viewpoint. Candidates wrote best when they drew on their own experience or observation, and expressed themselves with strong personal conviction and *sincere feeling.*

3. Few candidates showed the ability to write something worthwhile within the prescribed limits. Most of the better essays were longer than the length suggested in the question, "about 250 to 350 words." Candidates should be advised that 250 words is a minimum. They should also be instructed:

(a) to write *on the subject.*

(b) to strike quickly into the main theme,

(c) to round off the essay effectively.

4. Students attempting narrative should be instructed to deal with an incident which could be well developed in the time and space at their disposal. Many attempted to develop situations which could only be made effective by much more comprehensive treatment than they were able to give.

5. The commonest fault in the essays was the failure to use vivid, concrete language. Too frequently the candidate fell back on vague generalities and abstractions, or failed to develop what might have been an interesting and exciting situation by the use of concrete detail, as in the following: "Civilization has been the result of the respect of the individual, a unification of effort, and a common set of ever-rising morals."

6. The most frequent mechanical errors were the comma blunder, the verbless sentence not used for effect, faulty subordination and co-ordination, lack of parallelism, faulty paragraphing, failure to make the verb agree with a compound subject.

7. Many of the essays showed that the writers needed systematic review in the use of the comma. Since this punctuation mark has been familiar to them from Grade 5, lapses in its use can be attributed only to carelessness.

8. In their extremity many students resorted to material contained in Short Stories and Essays, especially to the work of Peter McArthur and Alan Sullivan. This was not considered serious if the candidate copied the style or spirit of these authors, but marks were deducted when he merely reproduced the original, as in the following excerpt:

> "Have you ever experienced the joy of seeing those big red apples picked by the bushels from the old orchard you sprayed last year? Have you ever walked hand in hand with a little Mary, through the cow pasture looking for mushrooms? Have you ever reached for a luscious peach which had ripened in the fork of the tree?"

9. While the majority of the candidates proved that they could write clear, coherent sentences, few showed that they had grasped the potentialities of the sentence. Candidates for this examination would benefit from drill in the use of balanced, parallel, and periodic sentences, and from attention to all the devices by which sentences are made smooth, graceful and rhythmic. The first paragraph of the essay printed in section 10 will provide examples.

10. The following essay was given a mark of 64:

MARQUIS OF MONTROSE

> James Graham, the "Great" Montrose, lived and died in the midst of the turmoil of Britain's Civil War—a period that has afforded us many ringing tales of valour and heroism yet none more glorious than his. The only Lowlander

to gain the magic circle of Gaelic song, to be accepted by the proud Highlanders as one of their heroes, his whole life had that touch of the miraculous that created a saga. Yet in spite of his genius as a general, his inspiring leadership in the face of the most difficult of terrain and great odds—in spite even of his political thought so strikingly ahead of his century, it is by his courageous death we remember him most.

He has often been called "the noblest of the cavaliers" but as a tribute that is misleading. Montrose was no hearty royalist unthinkingly devoted to the "divine right of kings," indeed he believed that unless the king fulfilled his duties to which he was bound by a supreme law, he could be justly overthrown. Charles Stuart with his fatal aptitude for slighting those he had most need of turned from him coldly at St. James and never till the end of his unhappy life completely reposed his trust in the one man who deserved it—who might have saved his fortunes. Yet Montrose, because it appeared to him that in Scotland freedom and liberty betrayed by the Solemn League and Covenant could best be preserved by Charles—devoted to his king's service all he had in life and beyond.

1644 the "annus mirabilis" in Scotland saw Montrose with the unreliable support of Alastair Macdonald's Highlanders and the even more uncertain Gordons sweep Scotland for the king. At Auldearn, Hilayth, Aberdeen and by that fateful rock where once for all the battle power of the Campbells was smashed, he faced odds often six to one. Still miracles could not continue for ever and at Philipaugh deserted by Alastair and deceived by false reports, his forces were defeated. Those that were taken prisoners were slaughtered in cold blood. His faithful friends forced him to flee to the Highlands and in obedience to his king's command he fled from there to France. He gained a kingdom and lost it. He had also lost his eldest son, his wife, his lands, and all his possessions.

From France he hoped to continue the battle but frivolous Henrietta Maria greeted him coldly. Only Rupert and Elizabeth of Bohemia were his friends. He refused command of the armies of France for he was bound by a duty and obligation that he could not ignore to the freeing of his country.

In 1648 he scraped together sufficient forces to return to Scotland. The promised help from France never material-

ized and the Highlands hesitated to rise. Waiting for Macdonald's support his army was overcome and he himself forced to take to the heather. There in hiding he was betrayed by Assynt of evil fame.

At last the Campbells and the leaders of the Covenant were jubilant. God had shone upon Scotland and delivered into their hands this Malignant. He was bound to a horse and led slowly and shamefully through Scotland. His dignity and patience began to win him friends among those who had hated him most. At Edinburgh he was thrown into prison. The trial was quick—scarcely an opportunity for defence being given. He pled that he had acted solely for his country's welfare and in the interests of Scotland which he dearly loved. Following the dictates of his conscience, he could not betray a trust so great. In his dungeon he was upbraided for combing his hair so soon before his death. He answered that for that night his body was still his own —the next day it would be his enemies—they might do with it what they wished. The boorish guards filled his cell with cigar smoke which it was known he could not abide. His calm and composure forced pity even from the hostile ministers of the Covenant.

The next day he was taken out bound to be hung like a common criminal. People lined the streets to boo and toss refuse at him. But when they saw him pale and compassionate they turned away with a sob. They began to hiss Argyle and the Campbells. At the Grassmarket the scaffold was in readiness. As requested he began to speak his last words—words full of pity and gentleness. He prayed that if he had sinned in his actions Heaven might forgive him. He begged for mercy for those who had hated and reviled him so. As he spoke his words were drowned with a roll of drums for the people were moved to tears. The sun came out momentarily and James Graham first Marquis of Montrose was hanged before the populace of Edinburgh. He had won more friends by his death than by all his heroic life.

III. *Question 2, Vocabulary—10 marks*

1. If a candidate attempted more than five words, only the first five were valued.

2. One mark was given for each definition, and one for each illustration.

(a) Definition. The candidate did not have to name the part of speech, but had to define the word as the *proper part of speech.* Meanings expressed in the form of a word, a phrase, or a sentence were acceptable.

(b) Illustration. (i) One mark was given for an illustration in which the word was used idiomatically and in which the meaning of the word was unmistakably clear and accurate, e.g., *utilitarian* "When I say that an oil furnace is a thing of purely utilitarian value, I mean that it is useful and hence valuable, but that it has no other redeeming feature, such as beauty."
(ii) Nothing was given for an example which, though correct, had no defining value, e.g., *cadaverous* "He is cadaverous."

3. Marks were frequently lost by candidates who failed to keep the definition distinct from the illustration. The illustration was required to stand on its own feet.

Marks were also lost by candidates who used a number of expressions to define the word, some of which were correct and some incorrect, e.g., "*irrelevant*—not pertaining to the case under consideration, weak."

IV. *Question 3, The Precis—24 marks*

1. 14 marks were assigned for matter, 10 for style.

2. Students should be warned to read carefully and heed the directions regarding length and style *given in the question.*

3. Matter

(a) To receive 14 marks for matter the candidate must have included in his answer 14 points of a possible 16.

(b) Marks were frequently lost because the candidate failed to perceive the three stages of the thought in the passage; that is, because he had not grasped the *purpose* of the writer.

(c) Certain faults were penalized by specific deductions. One mark was deducted for the first 10 words in excess of 120 (stipulated length 110), and an additional mark for each succeeding 10 words to a maximum of 14 marks. Candidates should be advised that all words are counted, including articles and prepositions. On the other hand, they should be warned that the use of

artificial compounds, and the omission of pronouns and articles reduce their mark. A precis of less than the required length usually lacked several of the required points.

One mark was deducted for each extraneous point, e.g., "Actions aroused by an environmental stimulus are motivated only by ourselves."
One mark was deducted for each distortion of a point in the original, e.g., "The history of the world is shaped on the struggle of men through the ages to live a better life."

4. Style

(a) The precis was judged by the standards of an independent, short composition. Full marks were given for a concise, coherent, correct style. The sentence in the question, "Your version should be . . . expressed mainly in your own words," was taken to mean that the candidate should seek to express the essential thought of the original, using his own words where necessary for purposes of condensation.

(b) Lack of variety in sentence structure and lack of linking words were the commonest faults in style. A precis which was merely a patchwork of phrases from the original was severely penalized on the score of style.

5. The following precis was given full marks:

PRECIS

The basis of a theory of a science of history is that all actions are caused by self-interest—either enlightened or unenlightened—and that every man follows the dictates of his desires; not those of his will.

However, that which distinguishes a great man from a small man is not the degree of his enlightenment but the degree of his self-forgetfulness and disregard of personal pleasure.

We are told that man does right because it gives him more pleasure but I believe that there is a fundamental difference between giving of oneself for the greater cause and giving of oneself for personal gain. All through life the beautiful character is the one which naturally does that which is good and generous.

6. The point outline from which the markers worked, and the sample precis submitted by the committee are printed below.

Precis (Point Outline)

1. (a) History can be explained as a science
   (b) by assuming humanity's basic selfishness,
   (c) a selfishness which may be either deliberate or instinctive.

2. (d) The assumption is that man's chief objective is his own well-being,
   (e) that conduct is controlled by desire
   (f) rather than by reason.

3. (g) That which distinguishes the noble individual from the average
   (h) is not, however, the intelligence with which he seeks happiness;
   (i) it is the selflessness with which he pursues the right.

4. (j) Some hold that man merely enjoys a higher satisfaction thereby.

5. (k) But this is not so.

6. (l) The martyr suffers, not for a reward,
   (m) but for high principles;
   (n) invariably the beautiful character is unselfish.

7. (o) Men esteem most those who forget themselves
   (p) in doing good.

SAMPLE PRECIS

History can be explained as a science by assuming humanity's basic selfishness, a selfishness which may be either deliberate or instinctive. The assumption is that man's chief objective is his own well-being, that conduct is controlled by desire rather than by reason. That which distinguishes the noble individual from the average is not, however, the intelligence with which he seeks happiness; it is the selflessness with which he pursues the right. Some hold that man merely enjoys a higher satisfaction thereby. But this is not so. The martyr suffers, not for a reward, but for high principles; invariably the beautiful character is unselfish. Men esteem most those who forget themselves in doing good. 113 words

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